



## Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 32**

February Session, 2018

Substitute Senate Bill No. 214

*Senate, March 22, 2018*

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through SEN. BYE of the 5th Dist. and SEN. LINARES of the 33rd Dist., Chairpersons of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

### **AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONSOLIDATION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10a-6 of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
3 *1, 2018*):

4 (a) The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall: (1) Establish  
5 policies and guidelines for the Connecticut State University System,  
6 the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak  
7 State College; (2) develop a master plan for higher education and  
8 postsecondary education at the Connecticut State University System,  
9 the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak  
10 State College consistent with the goals identified in section 10a-11c; (3)  
11 establish tuition and student fee policies for the Connecticut State  
12 University System, the regional community-technical college system  
13 and Charter Oak State College; (4) monitor and evaluate the

14 effectiveness and viability of the state universities, the regional  
15 community-technical colleges and Charter Oak State College in  
16 accordance with criteria established by the board; (5) merge,  
17 consolidate or close any institutions within the Connecticut State  
18 University System, the regional community-technical college system  
19 and Charter Oak State College in accordance with criteria established  
20 by the board, provided (A) such recommended merger, consolidation  
21 or closing shall require a two-thirds vote of the board, and (B) the  
22 board provides notice [of such recommended merger or closing shall  
23 be sent] of (i) such recommended closing, or (ii) such recommended  
24 merger or consolidation in accordance with the provisions of section 2  
25 of this act, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
26 having cognizance [over] of matters relating to higher education; [and  
27 to the General Assembly;] (6) review and approve mission statements  
28 for the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-  
29 technical college system and Charter Oak State College and role and  
30 scope statements for the individual institutions and campuses of such  
31 constituent units; (7) review and approve any recommendations for  
32 the establishment of new academic programs submitted to the board  
33 by the state universities within the Connecticut State University  
34 System, the regional community-technical colleges and Charter Oak  
35 State College, and, in consultation with the affected constituent units,  
36 provide for the initiation, consolidation or termination of academic  
37 programs; (8) develop criteria to ensure acceptable quality in (A)  
38 programs at the Connecticut State University System, the regional  
39 community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College,  
40 and (B) institutions within the Connecticut State University System  
41 and the regional community-technical college system and enforce  
42 standards through licensing and accreditation; (9) prepare and present  
43 to the Governor and General Assembly, in accordance with section  
44 10a-8, consolidated operating and capital expenditure budgets for the  
45 Connecticut State University System, the regional community-  
46 technical college system and Charter Oak State College developed in  
47 accordance with the provisions of said section 10a-8; (10) review and  
48 make recommendations on plans received from the Connecticut State

49 University System, the regional community-technical college system  
50 and Charter Oak State College to implement the goals identified in  
51 section 10a-11c; (11) appoint advisory committees with representatives  
52 from public and independent institutions of higher education to study  
53 methods and proposals for coordinating efforts of the public  
54 institutions of higher education under its jurisdiction with The  
55 University of Connecticut and the independent institutions of higher  
56 education to implement the goals identified in section 10a-11c; (12)  
57 evaluate (A) means of implementing the goals identified in section 10a-  
58 11c, and (B) any recommendations made by the Planning Commission  
59 for Higher Education in implementing the strategic master plan  
60 pursuant to section 10a-11b through alternative and nontraditional  
61 approaches such as external degrees and credit by examination; (13)  
62 coordinate programs and services among the Connecticut State  
63 University System, the regional community-technical college system  
64 and Charter Oak State College; (14) assess opportunities for  
65 collaboration with The University of Connecticut and the independent  
66 institutions of higher education to implement the goals identified in  
67 section 10a-11c; (15) make or enter into contracts, leases or other  
68 agreements in connection with its responsibilities under this part,  
69 provided all acquisitions of real estate by lease or otherwise shall be  
70 subject to the provisions of section 4b-23; (16) be responsible for the  
71 care and maintenance of permanent records of institutions of higher  
72 education dissolved after September 1, 1969; (17) prepare and present  
73 to the Governor and General Assembly legislative proposals affecting  
74 the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-  
75 technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (18) develop  
76 and maintain a central higher education information system and  
77 establish definitions and data requirements for the Connecticut State  
78 University System, the regional community-technical college system  
79 and Charter Oak State College; (19) report all new programs and  
80 program changes at the Connecticut State University System, the  
81 regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State  
82 College to the Office of Higher Education; and (20) undertake such  
83 studies and other activities as will best serve the higher educational

84 interests of the Connecticut State University System, the regional  
85 community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College.

86 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2018*) (a) If the Board of Regents for  
87 Higher Education approves a recommended merger or consolidation  
88 of any of the institutions within the Connecticut State University  
89 System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter  
90 Oak State College pursuant to subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of  
91 section 10a-6 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, the board  
92 shall notify the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
93 having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and  
94 employment advancement as follows:

95 (1) The president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities,  
96 the chairperson or vice-chairperson of the faculty advisory committee,  
97 established pursuant to sections 10a-3a of the general statutes, and the  
98 chairperson or vice-chairperson of the student advisory committee,  
99 established pursuant to section 10a-3 of the general statutes, shall  
100 appear before said joint standing committee in February and  
101 September of each year, until the February or September immediately  
102 following the receipt of accreditation for such merged or consolidated  
103 institutions, to update said joint standing committee on the merger or  
104 consolidation process.

105 (2) The Board of Regents for Higher Education and the president of  
106 the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities shall disclose to the  
107 cochairpersons and ranking members of said joint standing committee  
108 any communication with the New England Association of Schools and  
109 Colleges relating to such recommended merger or consolidation.

110 (b) Not later than two years after the institutions to be merged or  
111 consolidated receive accreditation, the Board of Regents for Higher  
112 Education shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of  
113 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of  
114 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher  
115 education. Such report shall describe any efficiency of function and  
116 cost savings achieved by such merger or consolidation.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |  |  |
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|-----------|---------------------|-------------|
| Section 1 | <i>July 1, 2018</i> | 10a-6(a)    |
| Sec. 2    | <i>July 1, 2018</i> | New section |

**HED**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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***OFA Fiscal Note******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None***Explanation***

The bill has no fiscal impact as the Board of Regents has sufficient expertise to report to the legislature's higher education committee on college or university consolidation in the ways specified in the bill.

***The Out Years******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 214*****AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONSOLIDATION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to provide the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee with three types of notice when it approves a recommended merger or consolidation of any Connecticut State University System, community-technical college, or Charter Oak State College institutions.

The first update occurs semiannually before the committee by the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) president and the chairpersons or vice-chairpersons of the faculty advisory and student advisory committees. This notice must occur every February and September through the year after the receipt of accreditation for the newly merged or consolidated institutions.

The second update is a report from BOR describing any function efficiencies and cost savings achieved by the merger and consolidation, submitted within two years after the newly merged or consolidated institutions receive accreditation.

Third, the bill requires BOR and the CSCU president to disclose to the co-chairpersons and ranking member of the committee any communications with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (see BACKGROUND) about the merger or consolidation.

The bill also requires BOR to report to the Higher Education Committee, rather than the Education Committee and General Assembly, about the recommended closure, merger, or consolidation of any higher education institutions under the board's authority in

order for such action to be valid under state law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2018

**BACKGROUND**

***New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)***

NEASC and its Commission on Institutions of Higher Education is the regional accrediting agency for colleges and universities in the six New England states.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 3 (03/06/2018)